

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This last chapter presents the conclusions and suggestions drawn from the research findings and discussions in the previous chapter. The chapter is divided into two parts, the first part presents the conclusions of the study while the second part deals with the suggestions relevant to this study.

5.1. Conclusions

The current study is aimed at investigating the process of constructing reading tests by the three teachers of English at vocational school as well as examining the quality of the teachers' reading tests.

All teachers involved in this study have implemented several steps in constructing a reading test, those are determining the basic competence of the materials, choosing the right text, determining the type of questions, deciding on how many numbers in the reading test, and making the scoring. This fact reflects the vocational English teachers have the ability in constructing a reading test.

The first consideration was on determining the materials on the basic competence in a syllabus. They decided to choose one or more basic competences for each test. The choice of basic competence was based on the complexity of materials covered. Thus, the test' purpose was based on the course objective lies on the syllabus. The second steps was choosing text. Choosing the right text became one of the most crucial things in reading test as it affects the validity and reliability of the reading test (Nation , 2008). After that, teachers made decision on types and number of the questions in the test. The choice of text, the type of questions and deciding number of questions were cyclical. They correlated each other. The length of the text affected number of the questions and the type of questions determined the number of questions. The last step was determining the scoring. That related to the score that the students got. The students' scores were usually as a teaching reflection. They may have seen as the success and

unsuccessful of teaching. Thus, the teachers felt it was necessary to make the scoring before they administer the test.

The findings and discussion in the previous chapter indicated that some teachers are competent in constructing reading test at vocational school level and some other not. It was found that the first teacher constructed “good” and “poor” reading tests, the second teacher performed two “very poor” reading tests, and the third teacher proposed one “good” reading test.

There were some strengths and weaknesses from the reading tests made by the teachers. The first strength is all reading tests made by the teachers were based on the course objective. All teachers were made the reading test based on the basic competence lies on the syllabus. Each basic competence has own objective with the specific materials. Therefore, the test’s purpose was clearly taken from basic competence with specific material. It shows that the teachers have the ability in administering the achievement test, especially the progress achievement test. It is in line with Hopkins, Stanley, and Hopkins (1990) who point out that good achievement test should be based on the syllabus design on the teaching materials’ column. It also indicated that teachers had an understanding of the fundamental issue and concerned in the appropriate use of language tests. Sometimes, the reading test gave the information on which point that students have strengths and weaknesses. It reflects one of the characteristics of diagnostic test.

The second point is that most of the teachers have implemented the coherent flow of information presented in the text with the following questions. That fulfilled one of the requirements of a good reading test. Next is the teachers have already sufficient ability in constructing literal comprehension questions, questions which drawing inferences about the meaning of a word in a context, question to find answer explicitly and question in paraphrase. That proof indicated that teachers already have the ability to design, develop, evaluate, and use language test in ways that are appropriate for a given purpose, context, and group of test takers. That was one of the most important requirements for teacher’s competence in language testing as proposed by Bachman and Palmer (1996).

Nonetheless, the reading tests also have some weaknesses. First, some teachers did not aware of text authenticity. Yet, authentic text becomes one the crucial things in selecting the right text for reading test. Some teachers made their own text too simple and easy for vocational level. Therefore, it didn't give the students information of the real situation on the target language. Second, some reading tests used the exact words in the questions. The use of exact words in the following questions didn't require reading comprehension. It made the reading test into less valid (Nation , 2008). It only needs to answer the questions in a cut and paste mode.

5.2. Recommendations

This study offers some recommendations for the practice of English language testing, especially in constructing a reading test. First, teachers should aware of authenticity of text in constructing a reading test. The authentic text often provides real-life examples of language used in everyday situations. They can be used to add more interest for the learner. Authentic texts can also provide information about the target culture and provide that culture's perspective on an issue or event. The rich language found in authentic text provides a source of input language learners need for acquisition. Through authentic texts, teachers can create a number of questions with the relevant information on the target language.

Second, for more valuable questions, it is recommended for teachers to create high level of comprehension questions by not using the exact words on questions. That is because high level of comprehension questions train students to think critically of what they have read.

For further research, it will be interesting to see on what kind of questions that the teacher can effectively develop for the best comprehension questions in a reading test. The further researcher is recommended to involve more sample of reading tests to be investigated. Then, it also suggested to construct a more complete criteria for investigating the quality of a reading test.

In addition, for the policy makers, this kind of issue can be used as valuable input to conduct such a training in a way of how to construct good questions for the teacher of English in secondary school, included the teacher of vocational English teacher.